

LAND USE ELEMENT

VIII. RESIDENTIAL POLICIES

Goal: Promote new development and neighborhoods in the City that:

- a) **Contribute to a strong sense of community and neighborhood identity;**
- b) **Are walkable places where people can shop, play, and get to work without always having to drive;**
- c) **Are developed at densities sufficient to support public transportation and make efficient use of urban services and infrastructure;**
- d) **Offer a variety of housing types for a population diverse in age, income, and lifestyle;**
- e) **Are varied or unique in character;**
- f) **Support “grid” and “flexible grid” street and pathway patterns where appropriate;**
- g) **Are visually attractive, safe, and healthy environments in which to live;**
- h) **Offer connection to the community instead of isolation; and**
- i) **Provide a sense of home.**

Discussion: The purpose of the Residential policies is to provide a Citywide residential growth strategy. The Residential policies address the location of housing development, housing densities, non-residential uses allowed in residential areas, site design, and housing types in neighborhoods. (See Public Facilities Section for policies on schools, churches, and other facilities in residential areas. See Housing Element for policies relating to housing types and neighborhoods and the Community Design Element for policies guiding quality design.)

Objective LU-BB: Manage and plan for high quality residential growth in Renton and the Potential Annexation Area that:

- 1) Supports transit by providing urban densities,
- 2) Promotes efficient land utilization, and
- 3) Creates stable neighborhoods incorporating built amenities and natural features.

Policy LU-123. Pursue multiple strategies for residential growth including:

- 1) Development of new neighborhoods on larger land tracts on the hills and plateaus surrounding downtown;

- 2) Infill development on vacant and underutilized parcels in Renton's established neighborhoods;
- 3) Multi-family development located in Renton's Urban Center;
- 4) Infill in existing multi-family areas; and
- 5) Mixed-use projects and multi-family development in Commercial/Office/Residential and Commercial Corridors Land Use designations.

Policy LU-124. Promote the timely and logical progression of residential development. Priority for higher density development should be given to development of land with infrastructure capacity and land located closer to the City's Urban Center.

Policy LU-125. Encourage a city-wide mix of housing types including:

- 1) Large-lot single family;
- 2) Small-lot single family;
- 3) Small-scale and large-scale rental and condominium multi-family housing; and
- 4) Residential/commercial mixed-use development.

Objective LU-CC: Maintain the goal of a fifty-fifty ratio of single family to multi-family housing outside of the Urban Center.

Policy LU-126. A maximum of fifty percent (50%) of future residential land capacity should occur in multi-family housing in parts of the City and PAA located outside of the Urban Center.

Policy LU-127. Infrastructure impacts of the goal of 50/50 ratio of single-family to multi-family outside the Urban Center should be evaluated as part of the City's Capital Improvements program.

Policy LU-128. Multi-family unit types are encouraged as part of mixed-use developments in the Urban Center, Center Village, Commercial/Office/Residential, and the Commercial Corridor Land Use designations.

Policy LU-129. Small-lot, single-family infill developments and plats should be supported as alternatives to multi-family development to both increase the City's supply of single-family detached housing and provide homeownership opportunities.

Policy LU-130. Adopt urban density of at least four (4) dwelling units per net acre for residential uses except in areas with identified and documented sensitive areas and/or areas identified as urban separators.

Policy LU-131. Encourage larger lot single-family development in areas providing a transition to the Urban Growth Boundary and King County Rural Designation. The City should discourage more intensive platting patterns in these areas.

Policy LU-132. Discourage creation of socio-economic enclaves, especially where lower income units would be segregated within a development.

RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY LAND USE DESIGNATION

Purpose Statement: Policies in this section are intended to guide development on land appropriate for a range of low intensity residential and employment where land is either constrained by sensitive areas or where the City has the opportunity to add larger-lot housing stock, at urban densities of 4-du/net acre, to its inventory.

Lands that are not appropriate for urban levels of development are designated either Resource Conservation or Residential Low Density Zoning.

Lands that either do not have significant sensitive areas, or can be adequately protected by the critical areas ordinance, are zoned Residential 4.

Lands developed with existing manufactured home parks that provide a transition to adjacent Rural Areas and/or are adjacent to critical areas but were established uses in King County prior to annexation may be considered for Residential Manufactured Home Park zoning.

Objective LU-DD: Provide for a range of lifestyles and appropriate uses adjacent to and compatible with urban development in areas of the City and Potential Annexation Area constrained by extensive natural features, providing urban separators, and/or providing a transition to Rural Designations within King County.

Policy LU-133. Identify and map areas of the City where environmentally sensitive areas such as 100-year floodplains, floodways, and hazardous landslide and erosion areas are extensive and the application of critical areas regulations alone is insufficient to guide future development.

Policy LU-134. Base development densities should range from 1 home per 10 acres (Resource Conservation) to 1 home per acre (Residential 1) on Residential Low Density (RLD) designated land with significant environmental constraints, including but not limited to: steep slopes, erosion hazard, floodplains, and wetlands or where the area is in a designated Urban Separator. Density should be a maximum of 4-du/net acre (Residential 4) on portions of the Residential Low Density land where these constraints are not extensive and urban densities are appropriate except as provided in Policy LU-134a.

Policy LU-134a - A density exception to the 4 dwelling unit per acre maximum is allowed for pre-existing manufactured home parks within the Residential Low Density designation. Upon cessation of the manufactured home park use, these properties should be considered for Residential 4 zoning.

Policy LU-135. For the purpose of mapping four dwelling units per net acre (4-du/ac) zoned areas as contrasted with lower density Residential 1 (R-1) and Resource Conservation (RC) areas, the prevalence of significant environmental constraints should be interpreted to mean:

- 1) Critical areas encumber a significant percentage of the gross area;
- 2) Developable areas are separated from one another by pervasive critical areas or occur on isolated portions of the site and access limitations exist;
- 3) The location of the sensitive area results in a non-contiguous development pattern;
- 4) The area is a designated urban separator; or
- 5) Application of the Critical Areas Ordinance setbacks/buffers and/or net density definition would create a situation where the allowed density could not be accommodated on the remaining net developable area without modifications or variances to other standards.

Implementation of this policy should be phased in within three years of the adoption of the 2004 Update.

Policy LU-136. Rural activities, such as agricultural and animal husbandry, should be allowed.

Policy LU-137. Warehousing, outdoor storage, equipment yards, and industrial uses should not be allowed. Where such uses exist as non-conforming uses, measures should be taken to negotiate the transition of these uses as residential redevelopment occurs.

Policy LU-138. To provide for more efficient development patterns and maximum preservation of open space, residential development may be clustered and/or lot sizes reduced within allowed density levels in Residential Low Density designations. Implementation of this policy should be phased in within two years of the adoption of the 2004 Update.

Policy LU-139. Minimize impacts of animal and crop-raising on adjacent residential uses and critical areas such as wetlands, streams, and rivers.

Policy LU-140. Control scale and density of accessory buildings and barns to maintain compatibility with other residential uses.

Policy LU-141. Residential Low Density areas may be incorporated into Urban Separators.

Policy LU-142. Undeveloped portions of Residential Low Density areas may be considered for designation of trail easements or other public benefits through agreements with private parties.

Objective LU-EE: Designate Residential 4 du/acre zoning in those portions of the RLD designation appropriate for urban levels of development by providing suitable environments for suburban and/or estate style, single-family residential dwellings.

Policy LU-143. Within the Residential 4 du/acre zoned area allow a maximum density of 4 units per net acre to encourage larger lot development and increase the supply of upper income housing consistent with the City's Housing Element.

Policy LU-144. Ensure quality development by supporting site plans and plats that incorporate quality building and landscaping standards.

Policy LU-145. Interpret development standards to support projects with higher quality housing by requiring:

- 1) A variety of compatible housing styles making up block fronts;
- 2) Additional architectural features such as pitched roofs, roof overhangs, and/or decorative cornices, fenestration and trim; and
- 3) Building modulation and use of durable exterior materials such as wood, masonry, stucco, or brick.

Policy LU-146. Interpret development standards to support provision of landscape features as well as innovative site planning. Criteria should include:

- 1) Attractive residential streetscapes with landscaped front yards that are visible from the street;
- 2) Landscaping, preferably with drought- resistant evergreen plant materials;
- 3) Large caliper street trees;
- 4) Irrigated landscape planting strips;
- 5) Low-impact development using landscaped buffers, open spaces, and other pervious surfaces; and
- 6) Significant native tree and vegetation retention and/or replacement.